

CURRICULUM PROPOSAL COVER SHEET
University-Wide Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

LSC Use Only

Number _____

Action _____

Date _____

UWUCC Use Only

Number _____

Action _____

Date _____

24B

I. TITLE/AUTHOR OF CHANGE

COURSE/PROGRAM TITLE WS 200 Introduction to Women's Studies

DEPARTMENT Psychology

CONTACT PERSON Maureen C. McHugh

II. THIS COURSE IS BEING PROPOSED FOR:

XX Course Approval Only

_____ Course Approval and Liberal Studies Approval

_____ Liberal Studies Approval only (course previously has been approved by the University Senate)

III. APPROVALS

Department Curriculum Committee

Department Chairperson

College Curriculum Committee

College Dean*

Director of Liberal Studies
(where applicable)

Provost
(where applicable)

*College Dean must consult with Provost before approving curriculum changes. Approval by College Dean indicates that the proposed change is consistent with long range planning documents, that all requests for resources made as part of the proposal can be met, and that the proposal has the support of the university administration.

IV. TIMETABLE

Date Submitted
to LSC _____
to UWUCC _____

Semester/Year to be
implemented _____

Date to be published
in Catalog _____

Revised 5/88

[Attach remaining parts of
proposal to this form.]

Catalogue description

WS Introduction to Women's Studies
 3 credits, 3 lectures/week

The course focuses on women as they are and as they have been; as represented by the work of writers, and as presented in the theory and research of various disciplines. Historical and contemporary images of women are examined in terms of their impact on our lives. The relationships of women to social institutions such as education, religion and health care are explored. Alternative theories explaining the roles and status of women are compared. The course attempts to help us understand the choices and experience women face in their everyday personal work and public lives.

The American Woman: Introduction to Women's Studies

Instructor Dr. Maureen C. McHugh
 Director, Women's Studies
 353 Sutton Hall
 357-4753

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 1:30-3:00
 Tuesday and Thursday 10:30-11:30

Description

The course focuses on the American woman, as she was and as she is, in comparison to her counterparts in other countries, and as represented by the work of American writers and as presented in the theory and research of various disciplines. The impact that gender has on our lives is analyzed with a focus on the function of language and the media. The relationship of women to social institutions such as education, the family, religion, health and sports are explored. Alternative theories explaining the roles and statuses of women are compared. The course attempts to help us to understand the choices and the experiences women face in their everyday personal, work and public lives.

The course utilizes a variety of pedagogical techniques including: lectures, discussions, homework, small groups, in class exercises, audio-visual materials and guest speakers.

Objectives

Students in the course are expected to:

1. examine contemporary gender roles and gender attitudes;
2. develop a historical and cross cultural perspective on gender and women's roles;
3. critique various disciplines in terms of gender bias in content, theory and method;
4. examine media and literary images of women, and the implications of those images;
5. become familiar with the scholarship on women conducted within the various disciplines;
6. appreciate the interdisciplinary nature of women's studies and be capable of applying an interdisciplinary perspective to women's experiences;
7. describe the experiences of women in relation to various social institutions.

The American Woman: Introduction to Women's Studies

Required Texts

Cahill, Susan (Ed.) (1975). Women and Fiction: Short stories By and About Women. New American Library.

Daniel, Robert. (1987). American women in the Twentieth Century: The Festival of Life. NY: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich.

Richardson, Laurel and Taylor, Verta (Eds.) (1983). Feminist Frontiers: Rethinking Sex, Gender and Society. Addison-Wesley.
Sapiro, Virginia. (1986). Women in American Society. Palo Alto: Mayfield Publishing.

Requirements and Evaluation

Final grades will be based on the students accumulated points using a standard curve and 300 points as the maximum. The cut offs for the various grades are as shown below:

270-300	= A
240-269	= B
210-239	= C
180-209	= D
<179	= F

Students may accumulate points in the following ways:

1. Written Assignments. Students must submit a series of written reflections/essays. Each essay will be worth a maximum of 20 points and will be graded based on communication skill, organization, originality, insight, and demonstration of knowledge of assigned materials. Students may submit as few as five essays, and as many as 12 essays; the expectation is that students will submit 8 essays. Failure to submit five essays on the assigned dates will result in failure of the course.

Some specific types of essays are required; other types are optional. The student must submit at least one of each of the following: historical analysis; fictional work review; nonfictional work reaction paper; and an activism exercise.

Essays may be submitted only on the dates specified on the class schedule and assignment descriptions. Students must submit at least one, and no more than three essays on each date. Late submissions will be penalized.

2. Exams. Two in class essay exams and a take home final will be given. Each in class exam will be worth 50 points. The take home final will be essay, cumulative and integrative and will be worth 50 points.
3. Participation. Based on active participation and demonstration of insight and knowledge of class materials, the student may earn up to 20 points.

The American Woman: Introduction to Women's Studies

Detailed Course Outline

1/23-1/30

Images of Women

Women and Language
Women and Media: Print Media
Women and Media: TV

Assignments: Document or newspaper analysis
Systematic TV analysis

2/1-2/8

Diversity Among Women

Race, Class, and Ethnicity
Black American Women
Immigrant Women
Global Sisterhood?

Assignments: Ethnic Roots
Image Collages

2/13-2/15

The Woman Question

Historical perspective on women's rights
Nature vs. Nurture explanations for statuses
Assignments: Interviewing our foremother
The Pennsylvania ERA

2/20-2/22

What is Feminism?

Historical analysis of feminist movement
Contemporary factions of feminism

Assignment: Accounts of activism
Experiencing sexism

2/27

From Private to Public: Transforming Society

Historical analysis of women's role changes

Assignment: Reentry women

3/1-3/6

Women and Education

The fight for coeducation
The classroom climate
Feminist pedagogy

Assignment: Assessing classroom climates

The American Woman: Introduction to Women's Studies

3/20-3/27

Women and Work

Women and housework
Women on the global assembly line
Sexual segregation in the workplace
Sexual harassment

Assignment: Descriptions of harassment

3/30

Women in the Family

Gendered roles in the family
Variations in family structures

Assignment: Draw your family

4/3-5

Women in Intimate Relationships

Femininity and sexual attractiveness
Marriage contracts
Lesbianism
Violence in relationships

Assignment: Write a marriage contract

4/10-12

Women as Mothers

The motherhood mandate
The maternal instinct
Images of mothers and Mother blaming
Mothers and daughters

Assignment: I wish my mother ...

4/16-4/19

Women and their bodies

Self consciousness/self acceptance
Women and health care
The importance of attractiveness

Assignment: Mirror exercise

4/24-4/26

Violence Against Women

Cliterectomies, foot-binding and suttee
Rape
Pornography
Victim Blame

Assignment: Violent images

The American Woman: Introduction to Women's Studies

5/1- 5/3

Women in Society

Women and Sports
Women and Religion
Women and Politics

Assignment: Heroines

5/8-5/10

Women and Social Change

Transforming our lives: The personal is political
Legal, social and economic equality

Assignment: Imagining the Future

Written Assignment Instructions

I. The goals of the written assignments for the class are to:

- A. demonstrate familiarity with the assigned readings;
- B. integrate class material and personal observations and experiences;
- C. critique theories and methods of various disciplines for gender issues and bias;
- D. understand and value the diversity and the universality of the roles and experiences of women;
- E. articulate ideas and insights regarding the operation of gender ideologies in everyday life.
- F. examine the relationship between personal decisions/ behaviors and societal structures.

II. The requirements of the assignments:

A. A minimum of five written assignments is required, but you may submit as many as twelve written assignments. Assignments may only be submitted on specified collection dates, and a maximum of three assignments can be submitted at one time.

B. You may select from a list of suggestions/options or you may devise your own. However, the following three assignments must be submitted sometime during the course:

- 1. Reaction to an assigned short story
- 2. Historical essay, or history based analysis
- 3. Reaction to an assigned nonfiction article

C. You are encouraged to submit expanded and revised versions of class exercises.

D. All written assignments should be:

- 1. original (your own work)
- 2. thematic or focused
- 3. organized and well written
- 4. typewritten (double-spaced)
- 5. 3-5 pages in length
- 6. carefully proofed and edited

III. Grading of the assignments. In general, assignments will be graded using the following guidelines.

Mechanics (5 points): Typed; Proofed and edited

Communication (5 points): Thematic/focused; Clarity of writing; Organization

Content (10 points): Appropriate focus; Inclusion of supporting examples or references; Relevant class material included; Originality/insight/astuteness; Inclusion of personal reflections, ideas, or experiences.

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Written Assignments: Suggestions and Examples

1. Reflect on the experiences of a woman you know who has an additional minority status (e.g. Black; Asian; lesbian; poor; etc.) Discuss her life experiences as affected by gender and her minority status. How does gender relate to her experience of her minority status?
2. Write a letter to the editor (of the school or local paper) regarding some topic/issue we discussed in class advocating gender equality and/or the elimination of gender bias. (Example topics: sports coverage; insurance rates; language usage; reproductive rights; rape reports and coverage.)
3. Recall your recent experience(s) with a health care system (i.e. doctor, clinic, hospital). Imagine that everyone's gender was reversed (i.e. the males were female and vice versa) including your own and that of the doctors, technicians and nurses. How would your experience be different in this imaginary setting? What did this exercise help you to see about gender bias in our existing health care systems.
4. Discuss or describe your own relationship to or experience in sports and athletics. To what extent have your experiences and attitudes towards sport been affected by gender?
5. Find an article reporting a woman's sports event, or an article on a specific female athlete. Compare this article to one reporting a man's sports event or reporting on a specific male athlete. How is the content/language/ tone/ focus different in the two articles?
6. Discuss examples of the sexual double standard from your own experience. How has the double standard affected your own sexual behavior/attitudes; the behavior and attitudes of women you know; and/or the behavior of women in general?
7. Ask 5 males and 5 females to tell you their favorite joke. Analyze their responses for gender differences. How many of the jokes were gender-relevant?
8. Rewrite a popular children's story, nursery rhyme or fairy tale reversing the sex of the main character. Discuss what the reversal reveals regarding gender stereotypes.
9. Observe the behavior of men and women in a specific public setting (e.g. the bus, the cafeteria, the library). How is their behavior similar, and how is their behavior gender specific?

10. Using photographs of yourself and your family as a memory aid, reflect on your gender role socialization. How were you treated differently from your opposite sex sibling(s)? Or how do you think you would have been treated differently had you been the opposite sex?

11. Visit a toy store. Examine the degree of sex typing in the packaging and display of toys. What types of toys are designed for males, and what types for females? How might such sex typing affect individuals?

12. Interview a number of individuals about their reactions to the word "feminism." Ask them to talk about their beliefs and opinions about sexual equality. Would you classify them as feminist? What type of feminist? Is this how they see themselves?

13. Reflect on the type of career/occupational counseling you have received. In what ways were the messages you received, and your career plans be different if you were the opposite sex?

14. Draw a diagram or picture representing the roles you anticipate having five years from now. What types of role problems do you anticipate? How might these be related to gender? How might life be different if you were the opposite sex?

15. Do you know any women who have been victimized? Given the statistics you should know several victims of sexual abuse, rape, and intimate assault. If you don't know of anyone's victimization, what does that suggest about society's messages to these women? Have you yourself ever "blamed" the victim?

16. React to the article "The Man in the Street, Why He Harasses." Have you experienced or witnessed any such harassment of women or girls? How did you feel? How can such harassment be eliminated?

17. Discuss the ways in which victimization of women is portrayed in the media. Focus on recent movies, newspaper, or magazines. Discuss the attitudes reflected in the media treatment. Was there any element of victim blaming? How might a female victim react to the films (newspaper reports, or magazine article)?

18. Make a list of advantages/privileges that women have in our society. Make a list of disadvantages/oppressions that women experience. Would you be willing to do without the advantages in order to escape the disadvantages? Do you see the two lists as connected in any way?

19. Research a woman, historical figure or contemporary, and write an essay about her. What do you admire about her? How was her life affected by gender?

Historical Analysis Essay

Assignment: Write an essay analyzing a class topic from a historical perspective, or analyzing the role of women in a specific historical period.

Requirements and Directions

Your essay must:

- a. demonstrate familiarity with the historical reading assignments for the class relevant to your topic, and
- b. relate to class themes and topics.

Your essay should meet the general requirements for written assignments:

- a. original (your own work)
- b. thematic and/or focused
- c. organized and well written
- d. typewritten (doublespaced)
- e. 3-5 pages in length
- f. carefully proofed and edited

Essays will be graded using the general grading criteria provided by the instructor. (Mechanics: 5 pts., Communication: 5 pts., and Content: 10 pts.).

Examples and Suggestions

Example I. Examine the impact of WWII on the labor force participation of women.

Example II. Interview an older woman. Ask her about her occupational choices. Why did she choose the job she did? What other options were available to her? Discuss her responses in relation to class readings.

Example III. Discuss the goals and methods of the suffragists. (Hint: You'll need to focus on one faction, one leader or one time period.) How do the goals and strategies of the women's movement today correspond to the approaches of their foremothers?

Example IV. Discuss the impact that a particular woman had on the course of history, and the relevance of her work to contemporary women. For example, discuss Margaret Sanger's vision for women's birth control. Have we accomplished her goals for a woman-centered birth control?

Reaction to Short Story

Assignment: Write a review or essay in reaction to one or more of the short stories assigned for the class.

Requirements and Directions

Your reaction must:

- demonstrate familiarity with the story (stories) by including some of the following: major characters, the theme(s), the plot or story line.

- relate the characters or themes of the story to class themes and/or materials.

Your reaction must meet the general requirements for written assignments; it must be:

- original, thematic, organized, well-written, typed, and carefully proofed and edited.

Your reaction may:

- involve comparing the characters and themes to those of other stories or to your life and/or people you know.

- include your opinions and preferences.

- include other aspects of literary criticism such as the analysis of the meaning of symbols and behaviors.

Examples and Suggestions

Example I. How universal is the experience of Mabel in "The New Dress"? Have you ever had a comparable experience? What is Virginia Woolf telling us about women?

Example II. How are "The Office" and "(To) Room Nineteen" similar? What do each of these spaces represent? Do the women you know have or need a space of this nature? (If you have read Virginia Woolf's A Room of One's Own, you may want to discuss her views on this subject.)

Example III. Discuss the mother-child relationship(s) portrayed in one or more of the stories. How are the mothers in two of the stories alike and different? Do any of the mothers resemble your mother? (Stories about mothers include: "Gifts of War" "The Worn Path," "The Eldest Child," "I Stood Here Ironing," and "Everyday Use.")

Reaction to Nonfiction Article

Assignment: Write a critique or essay in reaction to one or more of the nonfiction articles assigned for the class.

Requirements and Directions

Your critique/essay must:

- a. demonstrate familiarity with the article by including some discussion of the article's thesis and main points;
- b. relate the author(s)'s position or thesis to other class materials; and
- c. include some indication of your own opinion/position.

Your essay should meet the general requirements for written assignments:

- a. original (your own work)
- b. thematic and/or focused
- c. organized and well written
- d. typewritten (double-spaced)
- e. 3-5 pages in length
- f. carefully proofed and edited

Essays will be graded using the general grading criteria provided by the instructor (i.e. mechanics (5 pts), communication (5 pts.) and content (5 pts.)).

Examples and Suggestions

Example I. Discuss the cultural practices that institutionalize violence against women. What do each of these practices tell us about the role and status of women in that culture? Are there any practices that are comparable in our culture?

Example II. Do you agree with Rossi's "Biosocial View of Parenting?" How does her theory explain sexual stratification in our culture?

Course Analysis

A. Details of the Course.

1. This course is designed as an interdisciplinary introduction to the newly established Women's Studies Program. Students electing to minor in Women's Studies will be required to take this course, and will be expected to take it early in the sequence of Women's Studies courses. (A proposal for a minor in Women's Studies is being submitted.)
2. No changes in other courses are indicated.
3. This course is interdisciplinary in nature, and uses a series of classroom exercises, and personal essays to encourage students to explore the relation of the material to their personal experiences.

Course requirements and methods of evaluation are consistent with the pedagogy utilized in Women's Studies nationally. The writing assignments encourage the students to relate the course material to their personal experiences, and to develop their analytic and writing skills. Allowing the students to accumulate points through the submissions of (extra) assignments gives the student responsibility for her/his own level of learning and grades.

4. This course was offered by Dr. Maureen McHugh in Fall, 1986 and in Spring 1987 and 1988. Enrollments have been 20-35. Evaluations have been good (see attached).
5. This course is not dual level.
- 7,8. The National Women's Studies Association recommends this type of course for Women's Studies minors. Similar courses are offered by most institutions with a Women's Studies Program. Both Carlow and the University of Pittsburgh have a similar course (generally taught by the Director of Women's Studies); instructors of other Women's Studies courses are invited to present lectures on their areas. Chatham requires all students to take an interdisciplinary course, Gender Roles, as part of its core curriculum. Carnegie-Mellon University and Duquesne University do not have a Women's Studies Program. The instructor has attended two workshops on how to teach the introductory course and has received a selection of syllabi from other institutions.

B. Interdisciplinary Implications

1. The course is currently offered by the Director of Women's Studies.
- 2,3. The course includes an introduction to each of the areas covered by other Women's Studies courses (e.g. Psychology of Women, Women and Crime, Literature by Women, Women in History). It is designed to encourage student interest in Women's Studies and enrollment in other courses in the sequence. The Coordinating Council of the Women's Studies Program is involved in the development and review of the course.
4. Continuing Education students have been an asset to the course and are welcome.

C. Implementation

1. No new faculty are required. No space, equipment or lab supplies are required. Supporting materials (books and audio visual aids) have been ordered by the Women's Studies Program for Stapleton Library. The Women's Studies Program supports the travel of the director to the national conference.
2. No external funds have been used.
- 3,4. One section of the course will be offered once a year, until enrollments indicate the need to offer it more frequently.
- 5,6. The target enrollment is 30 students. The use of group discussions and in-class exercises prohibits larger enrollments.
7. This course is required for the proposed Women's Studies minor.

FINAL EXAM

I. General Instructions:

Grading of the final exam essay answers will be based on:

- Answering the question - focus;
- Presenting evidence for statements - research;
- Citing relevant readings - diligence;
- Organizing your answer and writing carefully - communication; and
- Indicating your unique perspective - insight.

To obtain full credit for each answer, all relevant readings from the assigned texts should be cited.

Answers must be typed (double-spaced) and edited.

Answers to the final exam questions may be submitted during any class period, but must be submitted by 4:00 PM Tuesday, May 9.

II. Answer ONE of the following (25 points)

A. Discuss women's experience of the institution of marriage. How might this institution be modified to improve women's health and status?

B. Discuss our contemporary cultural conceptions of Motherhood. Discuss how this conception impacts on the lives of women.

C. How have women's family roles changed during the past century? You may focus your answer on a particular role, or on a specific historical period.

D. Describe the family roles of Black women, or women from another ethnic group or another culture. How are their roles similar to, and different from the experiences of white middle-class women?

III. Answer ONE of the following (25 points)

A. Describe the employment patterns of women and the problems experienced by employed women during and immediately after WWII.

B. Discuss three aspects of occupational inequality experienced by women in: (a) traditionally female jobs, and (b) predominately male fields. Discuss parallels in the experiences of these two groups of women. How are their experiences related to gender roles and stereotypes?

C. Describe women's employment patterns from 1965 to 1985. In what ways have working women transformed the work place and society? What additional impact might we have.

Introduction to Women's Studies
Maureen C. McHugh

FINAL EXAM

I. Answer ONE of the following (25 points):

A. Define feminism. Discuss the goals, ideology, strategies and schisms/conflicts of feminism for one of the following time periods.

- a) 1840-1920
- b) 1960-1974
- c) 1980-1988

B. Discuss resistance to feminism/female equality

- a) in general (pp. 470-476 in Sapiro)
- b) historically
- c) as a reaction by (some) women to oppression (reading 51)
- d) of non-White women (reading 48)

C. Define patriarchy. Identify the elements of patriarchy. Discuss the patriarchal nature of one of the following:

- a) psychological theory (readings 11 & 5)
- b) language (readings 1 & 2)
- c) the family (readings 6, 12 & 17)